

NEWS MEMO

INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITY

CANNED BALLET PROTESTS TO CONTINUE AT BASS HALL MUSICIANS WILL PICKET ROMEO AND JULIET IN FW FEB 12-14 TICKET BUYERS NOT TOLD ORCHESTRA PIT IS EMPTY

- WHO:** The Dallas-Fort Worth Professional Musicians Association, affiliated Local 72-147 of the American Federation of Musicians, which represents more than 1700 professional musicians across North Texas and Southern Oklahoma, including musicians of the Dallas and Fort Worth Symphony Orchestras and The Dallas Opera Orchestra.
- WHAT:** Professional musicians will continue their protests of the canned music policies of Bass Hall's resident ballet company – Texas Ballet Theater – by picketing and leafleting the company's performances of Romeo and Juliet in Fort Worth.
- WHERE:** Bass Performance Hall, 4th and Commerce Streets, Fort Worth, Texas.
- WHEN:** 6:30 pm Friday and 6:30 pm Saturday, February 12 and 13; 12:30 pm Saturday, February 12, and 12:30pm Sunday, February 14, 2010, ninety minutes prior to the start of each performance.
- WHY:** Bass Performance Hall and Texas Ballet Theater are presenting performances of Shakespeare's classic Romeo and Juliet, with Prokofiev's score, stepped to recorded music in lieu of live orchestra. Bass Hall's resident ballet company traditionally employs the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra for performances in Fort Worth but instead is using "canned" pre-recorded tracks. The decision to replace live orchestra with recordings has eliminated hundreds of jobs for professional musicians and deprives audiences of a legitimate ballet performance. Despite the canned tracks, Bass Hall and TBT continue to advertise *Romeo and Juliet* performances online "with striking music by Prokofiev" without revealing to customers that live orchestra has been eliminated. The musicians' 2009 holiday season *Canned Nutcracker* rallies at the new \$350 million AT&T Center in Dallas were attended by nearly 200 protesting musicians who greeted patrons with picket signs, leaflets and a giant inflatable rat balloon. The demonstrations received [extensive media coverage](#) from TV affiliates WFAA, KTVT, KDAF, and KUNV, and from [KRLD](#) newsradio 1080. "Patrons are coming to Bass Hall to experience *Romeo and Juliet* with a live orchestra, but instead they will get ballet karaoke," said Musicians' Union president Ray Hair. Texas Ballet Theater and Bass Hall are charging regular ticket prices without disclosing that the orchestra pit will be empty. "Patrons paid for live music, but they won't get it," said Hair. The company boasted that it saved \$600,000 to \$700,000 by emptying its orchestra pit. A Dallas Morning News *article revealed that ONE AT&T PAC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER, JEANNE MARIE CLOSSEY, was one of two Texas Ballet Theater Board of Directors who were paid six figure annual sums totaling more than \$700,000.00 that went unreported in the "financially strapped" ballet company's IRS filings. Musicians say the ballet company recouped those funds by kicking out the orchestra. The Union will protest the ballet's canned music policy with informational picket lines and leaflets at all performances during the 2009/10 season.*

For further information, visit www.musiciansdfw.org or contact Local 72-147 President Ray Hair at 817-469-6040 or 817-988-5238 (cell). Release #17, January 29, 2010. Follow us on Facebook and Twitter